

A Witty Out of the Box Solution to End Corruption and Tax Evasion

The governments in the US and many European countries are very concerned, and very rightly so, about the problem of tax-evasion. Many of these governments have been pursuing some of the Swiss banks for information on their citizens who have deposited stolen tax money there, and some countries have even been engaged in heated discussions with the Swiss government regarding the secrecy surrounding the issue. In the developing countries, people and politicians talk about the rampant corruption in their bureaucracy, and the need to get rid of it. But everyone seems helpless and no effective step is taken to tackle the problem.

Well, the solution to these problems is quite at hand.

The problem of corruption, tax evasion and many other socio-economic problems can be solved totally by adopting banking cards as the only mode of payments. Abolition of currency notes and coins would abolish all illegal, corrupt, and dishonest practices. The evidence of illegal trading, illegal work, smuggling, drug pedaling, human trafficking and other socio-economic crimes would straightaway be available to the enforcement authorities.

As every customer would be paying through their banking cards, no business would be able to hide any transactions and under-report their sales. And, as the businesses would be making payments to their suppliers and employees also from their business banking accounts using the banking cards, there would be record of all their purchases, and there would be no chance of false invoices or receipts being submitted. This would solve the problem of under-payment of the VAT/Sales Tax and

the income tax.

Under that system, not only no tax evasion can take place, the black money sitting in the Swiss banks (and in other foreign countries) would also be forced to return to the country. That money cannot be brought back in the form of currency notes to the country any more. It would be rendered worthless unless brought back through the duly recognized banking system. And, no one can bring any money into their bank account without having an explanation for that and paying all the dues on it. So, rather than letting their money being rendered worthless, the past tax-cheats would prefer to bring it back to their country and pay the dues to their government. Like the speed cameras, different filters on bank accounts would do the IRS/HMRC inspectors' work. Whenever any unusual amount of money (eg, black money presently sitting in the form of piles of currency notes, or money coming from a foreign country) enters a bank account, a filter would trigger an alert which would be received by the enforcement authorities who then can probe the matter.

The system would also squash the problem of illegal immigration. No business would be able to employ an illegal immigrant, because there would be no "cash" to pay a person who is not entitled to work in the country. Now the records of paying workers' wages would be in the business's bank account. So, who would dare to employ an illegal immigrant! Bank accounts could have NI numbers on them. Illegal immigrants would no longer be able to breathe in the system.

Professional thieves would look for some other honest professions. Most of the thieves steal to resell those goods. But selling a good that was not obtained in a legitimate way through a bank account would simply mean inviting prison sentence. Even the potential buyers of stolen goods would be deterred by the fact that their purchase would get recorded in their bank accounts. Thus professional thefts would just vanish.

Similarly, it would be so easy to catch drug paddlers and human traffickers. Even fraudsters would not be able to get very far. It would be easy to retrieve the money lost through frauds, as it would be sitting just as an entry in another bank account.

The days of banks being robbed and people being mugged for money would become history.

There would be no queues in the banks for getting cash or depositing cash. There would be no need to visit a bank for day-to-day transactions. One would need to visit a bank only to open or close an account, or get some advice. The banks would not need big premises. Their staffing needs would also go down, and so their costs. So, the fee they charge from their customers should also be much less. Certainly, they would be able to afford that the payments up to a certain amount, let's say \$200/£100/Rs 1000, attract no charge. Thus the banking system would be more efficient and less costly.

In a country like India, there would be another enormous benefit. No government official would be able to take a bribe – not even a penny. They would have only one personal account at one point of time. Any money coming into their account would get recorded. Every government official's (and their family members') bank accounts should have automatic filters. The moment they get any money coming into their account from any source other than their employer, they would be asked to explain that.

There would be immense benefits to the society, and it would reduce cutting the forests.

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This article has also been published in **India Link International**, Dec 2009-Jan 2010

INDIA 'S ONLY MULTI-TOWN CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL ENCOURAGES KIDS A Report by our roving Critic BB Nagpal from Bengaluru



Bengaluru: The 5th International Children's Film Festival, the only one of its kind in the country in terms of its reach, closed earlier with all participants emphasizing the importance of making meaningful films that were entertaining and yet sent subtle messages that the young could understand.

A major effect of the festival was the large number of children who said they wanted training to be able to make animation and live action films for the young.

Karnataka Secretary for Kannada, Culture and Information B R Jayaramaraje Urs said the very fact that several thousand children from more than fifty schools had attended the festival, and the fact that it had been held in five towns and

cities of the state simultaneously, showed how popular children's films could be.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Festival, he promised all help from the state for promotion of children's cinema in the state and said the Government was actively considering the subsidy for children's films from two to four films every year. At present, two films get Rs 2.5 million each per year.

Others present at the closing ceremony included Mr A R Raju who is a former Vice-President of the Film Federation of India, the popular star Ramesh Arvind who stole many hearts with his presence and antics on the stage, and director V Manohar. They made a plea to parents to ensure the young got to see good films and said it was necessary for the government or the exhibition sector to make arrangements for such screenings.

The Festival organized by the non-governmental Children's India in five different towns and cities in Karnataka was aimed at ensuring that children even in remote places got to see good films. The Festival was held simultaneously at Bangalore, Tumkur, Davangere, Bijapur and Hampi (Hospet). The District Commissioners along with local NGOs supported the Festival at all the venues outside Bengaluru and ensured greater participation of children.

Several foreign delegates had attended the Festival. They included Mr Gerardo Nieto who is Director of the Carthage International Film Festival in Colombia, Bangladesh filmmaker Khalid Mehmood Mithu along with his children Arjo Shrestha and Shiropa Purna who are also filmmakers in their own right, Italian filmmaker Giuseppe Varlotta, and Anis Ben Mohammed who is in charge of International Affairs in the International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Tunisia.

Mr Urs also released the souvenir of the Festival, which apart from giving details of the Festival and having several

articles on children's cinema, also has messages of the President Pratibha Patil, Karnataka Governor Mr Rameshwar Thakur who had inaugurated the Festival, Karnataka Information Minister Mr Katta Subramanya Naidu, and Children's Film Society, India, Chief Executive Officer Kuldeep Sinha who was the Guest of Honour at the inauguration. The Festival was also attended by Andhra Pradesh Children's Film Society Chairman M Vedakumar.

In a surprise announcement, Mr Anis announced a proposal for a co-production between Colombia , Italy , Tunisia and India for a children's film.

Mr N R Nanjunde Gowda, founder of Children's India , called upon children who had ideas to come forward the way Master Kishen or the two children from Bangladesh were doing. He said his organization would annually organize a workshop for children on filmmaking.

Master Likhith, who has won the Karnataka State Best Child Actor award for his role in the film 'Naanu Gandhi' was felicitated on the occasion. The film's director Nanjunde Gowda earlier received an award from Carthage International Film Festival in Colombia Gerardo Nieto in the Children's films (education) category.

The main inauguration by Karnataka Governor had taken place in Tumkur, around 70 km from here, in the presence of Dr Shivakumar Swamiji of Shri Siddaganga Mutt, Tumkur, Karnataka Minister of Law and Parliamentary Affairs Suresh Kumar, Mr Kuldeep Sinha, KFCC Vice-President Rockline Venkatesh and actress Mrs Shruti Mahender, among others.

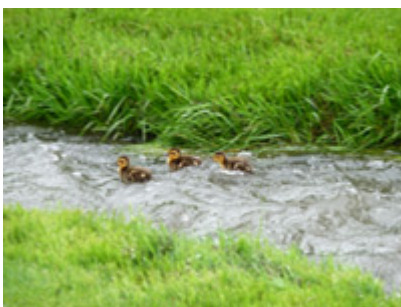
More than forty films from over ten countries including India had been screened at all the venues in the five towns and cities. A seminar on the future of children's cinema in the age of television, and Open Forum discussions with all the delegates and directors from India and overseas, were also

held during the Festival.

The Festival had special packages from Colombia and Bangladesh apart from films from Italy , Iran , Germany , Sri Lanka , Tunisia , China , the United States and other countries. The Festival also paid a tribute to seventy-five years of Kannada cinema with the screening of nine acclaimed children's films. There was also a package of films from the Children's Film Society , India , in Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Marathi, Manipuri, English and Kannada.

The Children's India was launched by Mr Gowda in 2005 to empower and expose young minds to theatre, performing arts, training workshops on animation and various other creative pursuits.

Are You A Happy Camper? by Sharon Moist



What makes you happy? I mean really, truly happy. Have you ever given any thought to what makes you the kind of *“jumping for joy, singing in the rain”* happy, that leaves you grinning from ear to ear for no apparent reason?

When I was younger, it was material things: new shoes; a new purse; the latest CD by my favorite musician, a new car. You get the picture.

Now, it's the simple things in life: spending quality time with my parents'; good conversations with friends; great water pressure in the shower; playing with a puppy; nicely fragranced soap; spending the summer at my home in Montana (where I am even as you read this); grapefruit scented candles; a beautiful garden of wild flowers; new baby ducks learning to swim in the stream off my dining room patio (see the enclosed picture); a really good thunderstorm; jumping in a really big rain puddle afterwards. Those are the things that truly put a smile on my face today.

What about you? What's on your list?

In today's fast-paced world, it's so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day stress of our lives that we forget to stop and enjoy the little things that make life so wonderful.

So now, after you're done reading this article, I would challenge you sit down and make a list of those things that make you truly happy – and I'm willing to bet that they aren't material things.

Then, when life becomes a little too crazy or too stressful to handle, pick an item on your "Happy List" and take the time to enjoy it – even if it's just for a few minutes. You'll be amazed at how great you feel during the rest of the day.

The Most Magnificent Palace in the East: The Red Fort of Shah Jahan, the King of the World – A lecture delivered at the ATTIC, New Delhi By Anisha Shekhar Mukherji



Good Evening. I would like to begin my talk today on the Red Fort of Delhi, once called '*The Most Magnificent Palace in the East*', with an image, which most of us present here—if not *all* of us—will instantly recognize. In fact, so would four year old children across the country who have just entered formal school!

This image is a part of the Red Fort's outer walls. the Lahori Gate, to be precise, atop which the Indian Flag proudly waves. Each Independence Day, it is this view of the Fort that we salute, that is telecast through the country and routinely printed on the front pages of our newspapers. Ironically, however, this overwhelming focus on the Red Fort as a *national icon* bound so inseparably with the identity of independent India and its struggle for freedom against British rule, has actually directed attention *away* from its unique design. A design which has inspired at different times and varying levels, all manner of art and architecture within and beyond the Mughal Empire. Sikh religious buildings, Rajput palaces, residences of noblemen and of ordinary people.

Nonetheless today, despite the fact that the '*Lal Quila*' is so deeply symbolic of not just Delhi but also of India, used to

advertise products from Basmati rice to restaurants in Soho in London; for many of us the 15th August view is all there is to the Red Fort. We literally and figuratively stop short at its Lahori Gate, rarely bothering to proceed within it or wonder about its long and chequered historical existence. For instance, how many of us realise that even the familiar view with the mound and the ramparts from where the Prime Minister addresses the nation, is actually the *antithesis* of the Fort's original design?! The original entrance to the Lahori Gate built **three hundred and fifty years ago** in the reign of the 5th Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, was straight and open to view. It was not hidden by a wall or by a mound, in keeping with Shah Jahan's actual and metaphorical accessibility to his people. The outer wall in front of the Lahori Gate which we see today in fact, reverses the very notion of the Fort's original function and appearance. This wall as well as that in front of the other main public Gateway into the Fort, the Delhi Gate was made on the orders of Shah Jahan's son, Aurangzeb, shortly after he defeated his brothers in the battle for the Mughal Throne, and imprisoned his ailing father at the Agra Fort. Shah Jahan is reported to have then written to him, "Dear Son, you have made the Fort a bride and put a veil upon her face.."



All representations of the Fort since then, whether in drawings of 19th century Delhi that we just saw, or the Delhi Tourism's official calendars in the 20th century, have been defined by this forbidding veil in front of its public Gateways, which was made even more opaque by the British during their takeover of the Fort. This occurred in 1857, a little more than two hundred years after the founding of the Fort. I would like to draw aside this veil, which has obscured not just the physical view of the Red Fort's interior, but also changed its relationship with its city of Shahjahanabad, and take you within the huge Fort today. To revisit the spaces

in it and give you some idea of what it contained originally, what it symbolized in the Mughal way of life, why the pioneering British historian-explorer James Fergusson termed it the most magnificent palace in the East, what is its relevance today and how it should be regarded and conserved. This understanding of the Fort that I am going to present has been pieced together after sifting through the various depictions of its past existences available today including the Mughal dynasty's court routine recorded in official court chronicles and Mughal miniature paintings, and personal diaries of individuals associated with the Fort, European travelogues, photographs and drawings and after studying the original Mughal structures that presently exist in the Fort. Interestingly, a map dating from the eighteenth century exists in the Oriental and India Office Collection at the British Library manner in which they exist today, with the original configuration.



The built structures have been shaded black in the plans of the Fort, before and after the destruction. A photograph of the area from the top of Jama Masjid shortly after the demolition also shows the empty spaces around the Fort, making it an island severed of its connecting links to Shahjahanabad.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Are You an Open or Closed Book? by: Sharon Moist



Are you open to learning something you already know? They say that “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” But what about people? Do you think it’s possible to teach someone something new, even if they feel like they already know it?

My father is a voracious reader, reading the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal every day, along with the stacks of books he has by his bedside. You see, my dad’s of the belief that just one good idea is the worth the price of the book. That philosophy has now stuck with me; thus the stacks of books alongside my own bed, as well! (In fact, I swear that between the two of us, we could open our own library!)

When I first started out in my career, I was always buying whatever acting book caught my eye. Yes, I probably had 2 or 3 others on the same subject already, but if I didn’t have this particular book, I would add it to my collection. Why? Because a new book often gave me a different point of view – especially if it was written from a different author.

For example: Right now I have about 4 or 5 books in my library, from different casting directors, on the casting process. Now some people may say, "Well, wouldn't one book do the trick?" And my response would have to be "No" because there are hundreds of casting directors out there, all with different thoughts, opinions and processes they use in casting a project. Therefore, if I just read one book, from one casting director, I could (potentially) miss out on information from another casting director that may actually help me land a job. Make sense?

The same situation applies to workshops. I recently attended a workshop on marketing, and as I introduced myself to the two people sitting next to me, I experienced two very different conversations. The gentleman on my right told me that this was the third workshop he had attended this year on marketing, and that he was really enjoying these workshops because even though he knew most of this information already, he had gotten a couple of new ideas that he was now using in his business and these ideas had already doubled his rate of return – in effect more than covering the cost of the workshop and all of his travel expenses.

Next, I spoke with the woman on my left, and she, too, told me that she already knew all of this information. She also told me that the only reason she was there was because it was another tax deduction for her business and it was a great way to play hooky for a few days without having to do any work.

Two very different people with two very different mindsets, and I would be willing to bet that you could guess which of these two people had a successful career and which one did not.

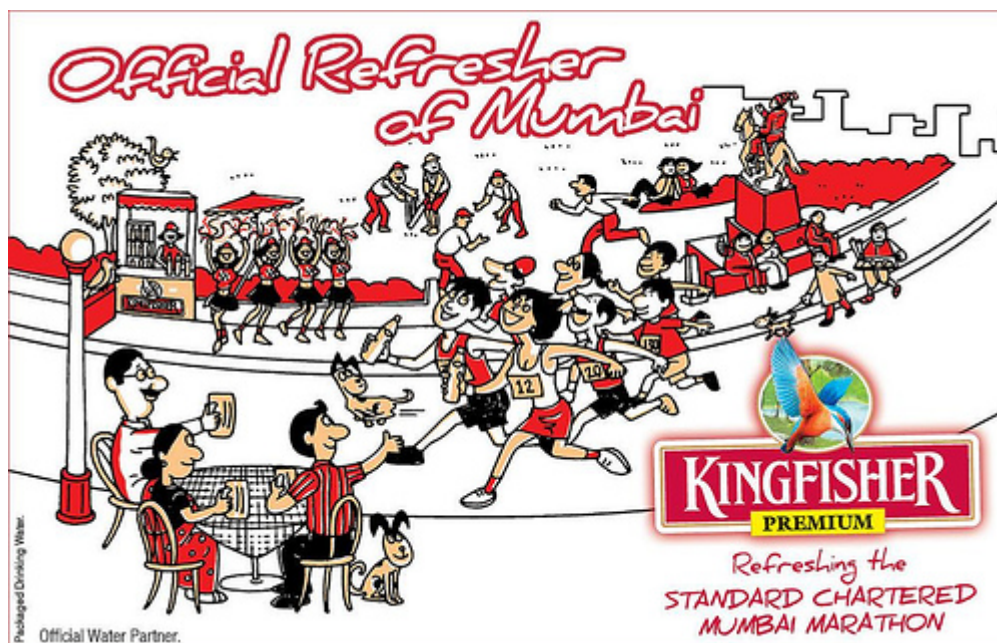
Remember: All it takes is one really great idea to change your life, and when it comes to your acting career, the one question you need to ask yourself is this:

Am I open to learning something I think I already know?

Only you can answer that question.

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The Spirit of the Running Spirit By Neville Tuli



We did it, I did it. Mind has overwhelmed matter, delusions outlasted reasons.

I completed the half marathon at 9:14am, 21km in 2.30hrs, having never run more than 10km in my life, so pushing oneself beyond oneself as have thousands of others. One imagined the lungs and breathe would collapse first but the legs turned out

more wobbly, after all I am a 'veteran' according to the marathon category, and childhood football probably took a greater toll than imagined.

It is unlikely that many would be able to have run the half marathon and have the stamina or will to go and write a few words to share with strangers, within the hour, but this need to write a few words finally became my motivation to finish the race (at the 14km point I think).

So many times the body was packing up, the knees crying, yet we dug deeper, and the body moved forward, and the mind tried to motivate itself to plug on. Initially I thought the run would be a good time for quiet introspection, to think clearly about all the issues which constitute one's infrastructure-building responsibilities. Yet, after the motivational start with Rocky's 'Eye of the Tiger' the first two km seemed so very tough, as if even six will not be reached.

As we moved into the third km only Prithviraj from Osian's seemed capable of sustaining the journey. My Delhi staff seemed keen but had little clue about what 21km implies, but they came and competed with themselves, and are strengthened for the next challenge. After the first three km the breathe had already dried and there seemed to be no chance of completing this race by running, to walk seemed inevitable, but the mind naturally said not yet, at least reach six before your first walking step.

Then I saw a man pass me who was probably the age of what my father would have been today, and I smiled, so receiving another dose of energy. Quietly the mind kept focused, recognizing that all the strength lies within, that one has pushed on a daily basis for the last fifteen years, and so it will automatically happen now. When the legs and lungs tire, the mind will shout: not now, there is so much within, stores of energy you cannot see,

MOBILE PHONES ENABLE HIGHER AND MORE INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH



Mobile Phone on Bike (L)

A Villager on Mobile (R)

19 January 2009, Delhi: A report on the socio-economic impact of mobile technology by a team of researchers led by Professor Rajat Kathuria of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) has found clear evidence to suggest that mobile penetration facilitates economic growth. It shows that Indian states with 10% higher mobile phone penetration will enjoy an annual average growth rate 1.2% higher than those with a lower teledensity.

Funded by Vodafone as part of a series of studies on the socio-economic impact of mobile (SIM), the report demonstrates that mobiles aid the process by which disadvantaged groups, including the low-skilled labour force, enjoy the fruits of economic growth.

Professor Kathuria, commented “We believe this analysis shows

that telecommunications is a critical building block for the country's economic development. Our work also shows that the real benefits of telecommunications only start when a region passes a threshold penetration rate of about 25%. Many areas have still not attained that level, which indicates the importance of increasing teledensity as soon as possible. If Bihar's mobile penetration rates were similar to those of Punjab, for example, then it would enjoy a growth rate that is 4% higher than its current rate.

" A good example of the positive impact of mobile use is a henna artist who began by setting-up-shop on the pavement and now runs a successful and growing concern. He arranges his business via a mobile phone, using it to order products, take bookings and record his designs for marketing purposes.

The report also contains specific studies of how mobile devices benefit rural farmers, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the populations of urban slums. The research also showed that information via mobile, such as weather reports and market prices, has begun to have an impact on productivity for the agricultural sector. However, it also concludes that other infrastructure challenges, such as poor roads and lack of refrigerated transport, need to be addressed in parallel in order for farmers to realise the full potential of access to information via mobile.

Dr Rajiv Kumar, Director and Chief Executive of ICRIER, suggests that the research report should provide government with the analytical and empirical content to refresh the policy environment for telecommunications. He believes that this is vital in order to attract investment to the sector and to ensure this investment is used to maximum effect. In particular, he recommends that more spectrum should be made available for civilian use and policy makers should consider changing the current caps on foreign investment and the criteria for mergers and acquisitions. These changes could stimulate greater investment in Indian telecommunications,

improve access to communication in poorer areas and ultimately lead to increased economic growth.

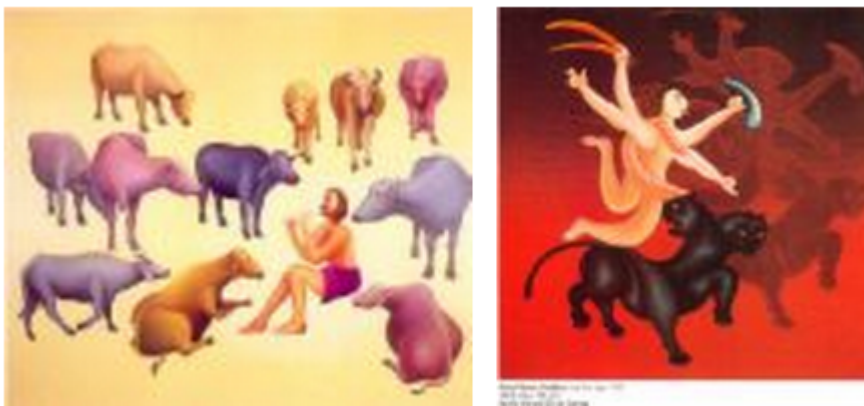
“India has a lower teledensity than many other emerging economies including China, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. We also lag far behind in terms of internet access,” said Dr Kumar. “It is therefore particularly important that in these challenging times we step up to the mark and create the appropriate regulatory environment to attract investment and sustain a world class telecommunications service. Our global competitiveness depends on this.

” The research highlighted that while mobile connections were growing at rates exceeding 10 million per month in 2008, there is considerable penetration variation within India’s borders; Delhi’s penetration rate is in excess of 100% but states such as Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Madhya Pradesh have not yet reached the critical 25% threshold. In addition, access to the internet is only around 5% nationally and in some states, such as Bihar, this figure falls to 0.1%.

Neil Gough, Director of Public Policy – Emerging Markets at Vodafone Group said, “We are pleased to have been able to fund this important study. As a company, we believe that public debate of these issues is fundamental to the development of effective regulation.

The research demonstrates that access to telecommunications acts as a catalyst to realise productivity and efficiency improvements, thereby making it possible for the benefits of economic growth to be shared amongst a greater proportion of the population.” This press release contains forward looking statements which are subject to uncertainty because they depend on circumstances that will occur in the future. No assurances can be given that these statements will be realised.

Manjit Bawa, The Legend, No More A Neice Reminiscences by Dr. Seema Bawa



Bawa's Paintings

It is strange to be writing about Manjit Bawa in his death for as a policy I did not write on him and his art. I have always felt that I would not have a discerning perspective when it came to his art because I was so close to him, for Manjit Bawa was my uncle, my father's younger and very dear brother.

We grew up in a joint family where he usually ate his dinner with us, and played games in the evening when we, that is my sister and I, were young. Later, he grew famous and successful and took on a larger than life persona. But for us, he always had a bit of hero because my grandmother made up for her inadequacy as a story teller by relating a serial on the Exploits and Adventures of Manjit at bed time. In all these he was engaged in acts of valour, strength and downright foolhardiness that froze my grandmother's blood even years later. He never outgrew these traits and almost everyone reminisces about his great mental and physical strength.

Perhaps that is the reason why we all clung to hope of his coming out of coma even after three years of the fateful stroke that struck him down on 17th December 2005. To see him lying comatose came as a great shock to me personally because my principal grouse was that he just could not be still and sit or stay in one place, except when he was playing chess or cards, games which I have known to last for days with very little sleep.

This restlessness however is rarely seen in work of his mature phase. There is a great deal of serenity and depth in his art. Often labeled a Sufi painter, he was that and much more. There is inclusiveness in his art derived from streams Indian tradition and philosophy which were decried by so-called avante garde artists and critics as being revivalist and pretty. He was inspired in part by the miniature tradition, especially the Pahari miniatures, but also by contemporary artists such as Krishan Khanna and J. Swaminathan.

He painted Krishna surrounded by cows but also dogs, because cherished divine melody could not be confined only to cows but is accessible to all. He painted acrobats and birds, and Lakshmi standing on a lotus in pink. He painted Ravi, his son, in a pensive mood. And he painted Narasimha killing the demon who was the primeval man himself. He painted his own personal and collective anguish against the devouring mobs of 1984 riots. He painted his Bharata with a lion and also Krishna and also the Devi. This iconographic eclecticism reflected the inclusiveness of his philosophy for his Krishna was his Ranjha.

Manjit Bawa was born in Dhuri in Punjab, probably in late summer of 1941 in a place known as the Goshala. His parents moved to Delhi soon after where he was to stay for most of his life. Here his elder brother, marking his entire lack of interest in studies and inordinate love for playing pranks started taking him to art lessons at Abani Sen's studio with

him. It is here that he developed a love for the arts and went onto study art at Delhi College of Art. At college he developed a strong friendship with Jagdish De, Umesh Verma and Gokul Deambi with whom, often under his brother's guidance and company, he traveled all over north India. He and his elder brother took up a hotel in Dalhousie to be near the mountains and to have a running business while they pursued painting and writing. Much of his work was done in Dalhousie where he went to get away from the brouhaha of the art world.

For us he was an uncle full of laughter and mischief who flashed in and out of our lives. He sang at weddings and family get togethers. He hated my cooking and taught me how to cook a few things so that he could eat in my house. As children he would make clay toys with us and paint them in bright colours and take us to the Yamuna on his very ramshackle blue scooter. He was always good for a tenner for an extra horse ride in Dalhousie. He was an artistic genius for the world. For us he was a beloved uncle with whom we could and did argue, fight and pummel. We will all miss him for many reasons. May his soul find what it was searching for in life.

3 Steps To Jump Start Your Career by Sharon Moist



One of the challenges most of my clients face at some point in their life is the challenge of trying to reignite their careers – especially when business is slow or they're not getting auditions. When that happens, I take them through a *Three-Step Jumpstart Process* to get them back on the road to success.

If you feel like you need to stir up your own career, then here's how to get started:

1. Get a Clear Vision

The most important thing you can do, in jumpstarting your career, is to get a very clear vision of your end goal. When **Barack Obama** started working in politics, he created a very clear vision for himself, and his life, and he knew he wanted to accomplish something BIG.

Eight years ago, however, his road to success was paved with complete and utter humiliation. With an empty bank account; his credit card rejected by the rental car company and no political clout (having just lost a congressional primary in his hometown of Chicago), Mr. Obama also failed to get a floor pass at the Democratic Convention in Los Angeles, and ended up watching the proceedings on a big screen TV in a car park, before flying home with his tail between his legs.

Eight years later, in Denver, Colorado, Barack Obama *WAS* the Democratic Convention, and five months after that, Mr. Obama was elected to the highest office in this country: **President of the United States.**

2. Commit to Your Vision

Once you have your vision, the next step on the road to success is to commit to it completely. **Walt Disney** loved animation and spent three years working on the movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.*

Unfortunately, his \$500,000 budget for the film was beyond comprehension at that time (1930's). Additionally, during filming Mr. Disney ran way over budget and needed another \$500,000 to finish the project, creating a final budget of \$1,000,000 at a time when the budget for the average cartoon was \$10,000.

However, Walt Disney was completely committed to finishing *Snow White*, and in order to get the additional financing he needed, he ended up presenting his project (including acting out the entire story) to a tough-minded banker, and got his loan.

The result of his commitment was a classic film, for people of all ages, which grossed \$8,000,000 at a time when the price for going to the movies was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for kids. And that was only the beginning.

3. Take Action on Your Vision

The third step on your road to success is to take action on your vision, because a vision without action is only a dream. One of Britain's most well known entrepreneurs is **Sir Richard Branson**, the founder of the **Virgin** group of companies. His road to success started after he dropped out of school at age 15. Diagnosed with dyslexia, at age 16 Mr. Branson embarked upon his first entrepreneurial venture by publishing a student magazine, entitled *Student*.

In December of 1999, Richard Branson became Sir Richard Branson when he was awarded a knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II, in the Queen's Millennium Honors List, for "services to entrepreneurship".

Since that time, Richard Branson has expanded the Virgin brand to now include more than 200 entertainment, media and travel companies, thereby creating one of the most

recognizable companies around the world

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Keval Arora's Kolumn

For Whom Nobel's Toll



Harold Pinter passed away on 24 December 2008. He was 78 and had been undergoing treatment for liver cancer. Like most Nobel prizes for Literature, the choice of the British playwright Harold Pinter has also had its share of detractors. There have been all kinds of murmurings against Pinter getting the big prize, ranging from doubts about his literary worth to snide remarks about extraneous considerations having played a role in the selection. The prize for the slyest reaction – assuming that it wasn't the ghastly mistake it was made out to be – goes of course to the Sky Television newscaster who assumed that the breaking news about Pinter must have been to announce his demise (Pinter had taken a bad fall some days earlier) and therefore led off with an announcement that Pinter had died, before hesitating and then correcting herself to say that he had been awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize for Literature instead.

Well, to be honest, I'm not sure the word 'instead' was

actually used, but given the bad grace with which his award has been received in some quarters, I wouldn't be surprised if it was. It's not difficult to figure out why Pinter's selection has been met with churlishness. On the one hand, a body of mainstream taste has tended to deride Pinter's theatre as just so much fluff. Pinter's departures from staple theatrical modes have often been seen as a thinning out of the fundamentals of theatre, and even as evidence of his inability to get the basics right – much in the manner of the standard joke that Picasso's cubism springs from his lack of talent at drawing like everyone else. Pinter's technique of conjuring up dramatic tension and menace out of thin air, so to speak, has often provoked the incredulous suspicion that is bestowed upon all innovations and departures from the mainstream.

In recent years, Pinter's political activism has provoked another kind of ire. The ill-tempered outburst of John Simon, an old Pinter baiter, on learning of Pinter's Nobel prize, is interesting for the disarmingly guileless manner in which it reveals the prejudice that feeds its indignation. When Simon says, "I would have gladly accorded him the Nobel for Arrogance, the Nobel for Self-Promotion, or the Nobel for Hypocrisy – spewing venom at the United States while basking in our dollars – if such Nobels existed. But the Nobel for Literature? I think not", he exposes the burr that's actually prickling his behind.

Evidently, what has got Simon's goat is not Pinter's literary worthlessness, but the fact that the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to someone who has indefatigably campaigned against American and British adventurism in Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq, and has therefore shown himself to be of the 'enemy camp'. Evidently, Simon's tirade typifies the brand of opinion which wants artists to confine themselves to their work and desist from engaging in any form of activism, especially that which pits them against the weight of majoritarian opinion. (Perhaps this is why Arundhati Roy

continues to raise the hackles of professional dabblers in that hallowed literary form, the Letters to the Editor.) And, evidently, Simon believes that he who pays pipers has the moral, nay spiritual, sanction to call the shots along with the tunes.

Nah, I shouldn't trash letters to editors. For, how else could I have gleaned that lovely nugget of information, contributed by a reader to the *Guardian*, concerning "the sullen, deafening silence from Downing Street about the new British Nobel Laureate, Harold Pinter?" The British government's wariness in celebrating the achievement of a countryman simply because of his vocal (and forgivably intemperate) criticism of state policy is just the kind of silence that would be familiar to Pinter, given the evocative treatment of silence in his plays. Of a piece with such silencing is an article lauding Pinter's Nobel achievement that has been carried in the latest issue of *Britain Today*, a news magazine produced by the British High Commission in India. Unsurprisingly, it makes absolutely no mention of Pinter's outspoken criticism of British foreign policy, a criticism that he has stuck to despite constant mockery and ridicule. How else can one read the title of that article, "Master of Silence", except as a desperate act of wish-fulfilment!

Is one over-emphasising Pinter's political stance as a factor in his getting the award and in the reactions to it? I don't think so – and not simply because others have commented that the Swedish Nobel committee may have been inclined to favour a writer who has voiced his anti-war sentiments in no uncertain terms (Pinter has famously denounced Bush as a "mass murderer" and dismissed Blair as "that deluded idiot"), given the fact that the Swedish people too were extremely vocal in their anti-Iraq war protests. If this sounds like a slur on the literary credentials of Harold Pinter, it is interesting to see him make the same connection, albeit in a less whining tone: "Why they've given me this prize I don't know. ... But I

suspect that they must have taken my political activities into consideration since my political engagement is very much part of my work. It's interwoven into many of my plays." That this is a man speaking with a modesty characteristic of the greatest writers is par for the course. But, it is unusual to find a writer who values his political conscience as much if not more than his writing, especially as even readers are often uncomfortable with such privileging.

It's not as if Pinter needed the sympathy of political fraction. His credentials as a writer are justification enough for the Nobel award. He isn't the writer of whom no one's heard, as some previous Nobel awardees have been. Not when his plays are widely translated and performed in other languages; not when they pop up regularly in drama syllabi of Literature Departments; and certainly not when 'Pinteresque' is now staple lit-crit jargon for a patented blend of mundane but oblique dialogue, brooding silences and ineffable unease, all floating gingerly on a bed of sudden incongruity. (Anyway, what does the label "unheard-of author" mean? Surely, nothing more than the writer's works having not been translated (yet) into English, and therefore being unfamiliar to the international publishing scene....)

Pinter is now 75 years old, with a long writing and performance career of considerable range and distinction. He has acted on stage, film, television and radio. He has written nearly thirty plays since 1957, and has innumerable drama sketches, poems and prose published in several volumes. He has directed over 25 productions of his own and others' plays, adapted novels for the stage (notably Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*) and for film (for instance, Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and Kafka's *The Trial*), adapted his plays for radio and television, written over 20 screenplays (*The Servant* and *The Go-Between*, both directed by Joseph Losey, being two delightful instances), and is now so immersed in speaking out on political matters that earlier this year he

spoke of not writing any more plays in order to focus his energy on such issues.

Initially, things didn't look promising; Pinter didn't burst in on the scene in the manner of other path-breaking dramatists. The 1956 commercial and critical success of Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, notwithstanding its combative indecorum, had suggested that British audiences were tiring of conventional fare, but Pinter's first plays in 1957-58 (*The Room*, *The Dumb Waiter* and *The Birthday Party*) were received with bewilderment and hostility. (That this could happen despite the praise showered on the English premiere of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in 1955 is curious, given the several affinities that have subsequently been noted between Beckett's and Pinter's theatrical worlds.) It wasn't until 1960 that Pinter had his first success with *The Caretaker*. From then on, plays such as *The Homecoming* (1964), *Landscape and Silence* (1967 & 1968), *No Man's Land* (1974) and *Betrayal* (1978) established Pinter's reputation as a unique voice in contemporary theatre. To such an extent that *The Dumb Waiter*, along with Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*, soon became an absolute must-do for budding thespians in college theatre societies.

Pinter's plays revolve typically around contestations for territory. Conflicts, sparked off by intrusions into a closed space by an outside force, are conducted with a strange mix of ferocity and dulled detachment. His characters and their dialogues are rarely explicated through conventional excavations of motivation and memory, and often viciousness and pain lurk submerged beneath an evasive surface composed of guilt, uncertainty, everyday phrases and restless silences. The 'facts' on which these contestations are pegged are usually unreliable, for there is little that is either 'true or false' in Pinteresque space.

The unnamed tension of these plays are located in such a claustrophobic, inter-personal space that Pinter's writing has

been criticized for turning its back upon the political, an impression that was confirmed when Martin Esslin included Pinter in his seminal study, *The Theatre of the Absurd*. However, the later plays – such as *One for the Road* (1984), *Mountain Language* (1988) and *Ashes to Ashes* (1996) – are more distinctly political. But, here too authoritarian structures of repression and torture are evoked rather than articulated, and filter through spare exchanges between oppressor and victim, and the slippages of memory and knowledge. Perhaps, this phase of Pinter's writing is less a 'shift' from his early work than an extension of earlier preoccupations into a wider territory.

Though the Nobel citation – Pinter's plays "uncover the precipice under everyday prattle and *force entry into oppression's closed rooms*" (my italics) – celebrates the dramatist as much as it does the political activist, the writer himself draws sufficient distinction between his preoccupations as an artist and as a "political intelligence" to not let the achievements of one absolve him of the responsibility enjoined upon the other. He recently had this to say of the road he's travelled: "In 1958, I wrote, 'there are no hard distinctions between what is real and what is unreal... A thing is not necessarily either true or false; it can be both true and false.' I believe that these assertions . . . do still apply to the exploration of reality through art. So as a writer I stand by them but as a citizen I cannot. As a citizen I must ask: What is true? What is false?"

In an interview some years ago, Pinter had rued the bane of British intellectual life being the mockery directed at artists who take a stand on political issues, and had warned, "Well, I don't intend to simply go away and write my plays and be a good boy. I intend to remain an independent and political intelligence in my own right." What lovelier spectacle can there be than this – of a dramatist, who goes on to win the Nobel Prize, acknowledging that conscientious citizenship is a

more urgent cry than any artistic calling?

This article was published earlier in FIRST CITY (Dec 2006)
after Pinter was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature